

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 09770 111227Z
ACTION NEA-10

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: OVIP (CHRISTOPHER, WARREN)
SUBJ: BRIEFING PAPERS FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY'S VISIT

REF: STATE 157966

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTTEL, EMBASSY SUBMITS BRIEFING
PAPER ON INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

2. THE JANATA GOVERNMENT CAME TO POWER WITH THE PLEDGE
OF REORIENTING DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS TO GIVE TOP PRIORITY
TO AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT GENER-
ATION PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS, AND REDUCTION OF
INCOME AND WEALTH DISPARITIES, INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM IS IN THE INITIAL THROES OF ADJUSTING TO THESE
OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE VERY REAL CONSTRAINTS OF SHORT
BUDGETARY RESOURCES AND THE NEED TO COMPLTE ONGOING
PROGRAMS. THE NEW ORIENTATION WILL PROBABLY NOT BE
FULLY ARTICULATED UNTIL THE SIXTH FIVE YEAR PLAN PERIOD
BEGINNING IN 1979.

3. THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET FOR 1977-78 REFLECTS
ONLY A MODEST SHIFT IN DIRECTION. SOME INCREASES ARE
PROVIDED FOR AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATIN, POWER, VILLAGE
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INDUSTRY, FARM-TO-MARKET ROADS, AND VILLAGE POTABLE
WATER SUPPLY. AGRICULTURE/RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS
FOR 30 PERCENT OF THIS YEAR'S \$11 BILLION DEVELOP-
MENT PLAN BUDGET. A BEGINNING ON INCREASED RURAL
EMPLOYMENT IS TO BE MADE THROUGH EXTENSION OF INTEN-
SIVE AGRICULTURE, RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, AND
PROMOTION OF FOOD PROCESSING AND OTHER SMALL-SCALE

INDUSTRIES IN RURAL AREAS. SMALL INDUSTRY IN GENERAL IS BEING PROMOTED THROUGH LIBERALIZED IMPORT OF CAPITAL GOODS AND MATERIALS, AND ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS.

4. IN REGARD TO FAMILY PLANNING, THE PROGRAM HAS SUFFERED A SEVERE SET BACK AS A RESULT OF THE COERCIVE MEASURES ADOPTED DURING THE EMERGENCY. THE GOVERNMENT'S NEW POLICY OF A COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY EFFORT FULLY INTEGRATED WITHIN A NEW EXPANDED RURAL HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND FAMILY WELFARE PROGRAM HAS SHOWN NO SIGNS OF REGAINING LOST MOMENTUM. COMPARED TO 8 MILLION STERILIZATIONS LAST YEAR, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE 4 MILLION TARGETED FOR THIS YEAR CAN BE MET. THE NEW INTEGRATED RURAL HEALTH PLAN, WHICH CALLED FOR TRAINING OF MASSIVE NUMBERS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS FROM THE VILLAGES, IS ALSO OFF TO A SLOW START. THIS YEAR'S BUDGET FAILED TO PROVIDE THE INCREASES NEEDED TO LAUNCH THE PROGRAM, PENDING FURTHER REVIEW BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

5. RECOGNIZING THE NASCENT CHARACTER OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, THE INDIA CONSORTIUM MEETING IN PARIS EARLY THIS MONTH ADOPTED A SYMPATHETIC VIEW; THE WORLD BANK AND OTHER DONORS PLEDGED OVER \$2 BILLION IN NEW COMMITMENTS, SLIGHTLY MORE THAN LAST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YEAR. THE GOI WAS URGED TO TAKE NEW INITIATIVES IN APPLYING TO DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES ITS TWO MAJOR CURRENT ECONOMIC STRENGTHS: UNPRECEDENTED FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES OF \$4 BILLION, AND RECORD STOCKS OF 20 MILLION TONS OF FOODGRAINS. GOHEEN

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